

## Mary Lou Terrien

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**From:** Hill, Heritage <heritage@heritagehillweb.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 24, 2016 10:54 AM  
**To:** Mary Lou Terrien  
**Subject:** HB 5232

We ask that the Heritage Hill Association's comments be included in any public record of hearings on this matter. Thank you.

RE: Bills HB 5232 & SB720  
Historic Preservation Modernization Act  
From: Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors

The Heritage Hill Historic District was designated an historic district in 1971. It is the result of local property owners taking action to save their homes from the 'urban renewal' plans that threatened the existence of these homes and this neighborhood. The Heritage Hill Association, which represents these neighbors' has long been committed to working collaboratively with its elected local and state officials as well as the City of Grand Rapids in order to protect the personal rights of all our residents and property values of our local property owners.

HB5232 & SB720, the Historic Preservation Modernization Act proposed by Representative Afendoulis and Senator McGregor purports to enhance the personal property rights of residents in historic districts, when in actuality it is precisely the historic district status that protected both the personal rights of residents through local control and significantly increased the property values of these homes.

The Heritage Hill Association which represents the one of the oldest and largest historic districts in the state of Michigan, was not consulted in the formulation of this bill and we wonder what historic preservation organizations were consulted?

We believe that HB5232 & SB720 jeopardize property owners' investments in historic districts by subjecting districts to a citywide renewal vote every ten years. This would allow the vote of residents outside of a historic district to determine if that district would be allowed to continue to exist. This provision actually takes away local control – control by neighborhood residents that these historic districts have always enjoyed. We understand that this provision is no longer being considered but we must state our opposition to this proposal in case it has not formally been removed.

There are other significant issues with this bill that are cause for alarm. HB 5232 jeopardizes property owners' rights by allowing changes to historic neighborhoods that are not in line with the Department of Interior guidelines. This jeopardizes Heritage Hill's National designation and can result in the loss of tax credits for historic repairs on income producing properties. Another is allowing decisions regarding historic repairs to be based on politics. PA 169 has a proven track record of protecting Michigan's historic treasures and it has fostered millions of private investment dollars. This highly successful public act works and thousands of property owners have benefited from the protection it provides.

We ask that you do not jeopardize the enormous economic of impact of preservation and the personal rights of our residents. We ask that you challenge and oppose changes to PA 169.

Sincerely,

Jim Payne, HHA President

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**2016 Home Tour - May 21 and 22, 2016**